



REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) over Flynn et al. in view of Hoffman, Jr. et al. Applicants respectfully disagree since the cited references, even when combined, do not teach all of the features of Applicants' claimed invention, and some of these same features were ignored in the Office Action. For instance, and in regard to claim 1, it requires that a center support have a filter head attachment adjacent one end and a bowl attachment adjacent an opposite end. Neither of the cited references teach a center support having attachments at opposite ends as in Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that all of the outstanding §103 rejections against claims 1-11 be withdrawn.

Claim 2 should also be allowable over the cited art since neither of the references teach a bowl attached to one end of a center support.

Claim 3 should also be allowable over and above the reasons set forth with regard to claims 1 and 2 since neither of the cited references show a center support with one end attached to a filter head and an opposite end attached to a bowl and, and including an annular seal between the bowl and the filter head.

Applicants respectfully assert that claim 4 is also allowable over and above the reasons set forth with regard to claims 1, 2 and 3 since Flynn et al. does not even appear to teach a center support, and the Hoffman Jr. et al. reference teaches a metallic center tube. See item 12 of Hoffman Jr. et al.

Claim 5 should also be allowable since neither of the cited references show first and second end caps in contact with both a metallic screen filter element and the center support.

Claim 6 should also be allowable since neither of the cited references appear to show or suggest the first and second end caps that are removeably attached to anything that could be fairly characterized as a center support.

Claim 7 should also be allowable since it does not appear as if the cited references even discuss the notion of including a hydrophobic coating on a metallic screen filter element.

Claim 8 should also be allowable since it requires that the center support be permanently fixed to the metallic screen element. This aspect of the present invention could prevent a bowl from being re-mated to a filter head without a filter element being present. Again, neither of the cited references appear to show or suggest this aspect of the claimed invention.

Claim 9 should also be allowable since it does not appear as if the cited references discuss the notion of engines that include a filter assembly with interchangeable paper or metallic screen filter elements. Claims 10 and 11 also cannot be fairly read upon anything taught by the combined teachings of the cited references. Claim 9 has nevertheless been amended to make explicit that which was implicit in the claim as originally filed. Therefore, Applicants again respectfully request that all of the outstanding §103 rejections against claims 1-11 be withdrawn.

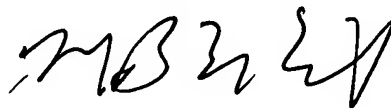
With regard to claims 12 and 13, since neither of the cited references show a center support that is detachable from both the filter head and a bowl so as to facilitate washing of the metallic screen filter element, these claims should be allowable over the art of record.

Claim 14 should also be allowable over the art of record since neither of the cited references appear to teach the notion of replacing either a paper or metallic screen filter element with the other of a paper metallic screen filter element in a filtration portion of a fluid system.

In order to properly reject any of Applicants' claims, the Examiner should at least have to cite to a reference that teaches a filter assembly with a center support that is attachable to a bowl at one end and to a filter head at its opposite end. Unless such teachings can be found in the art, Applicants claims should be allowed.

This application is believed to be in condition for allowance of claims 1-14. However, if the Examiner believes that some minor additional clarification would put this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (812) 333-5355 in order to hasten the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MB McNeil', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael B. McNeil
Reg. No. 35,949